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Lo, the key art thou, my people,  
To the old king's palace door!

. . . . .

Art the key to all those wondrous,  
All those dear and priceless treasures:  
Torah, charity and faith!—  
Only, so that never, never,

Thee in all this world, my people,  
Should he lose, has thy Creator  
Fastened thee beyond escaping  
To a great and heavy chain.

To a heavy chain of sorrows  
God has made thee fast, and said:  
Go, my people! tho' the stormwind  
And the tempest rage around thee,

Thou endurest—thou endurest!

### A FANTASY.

EACH man is a trader,  
The world is a fair:  
They boil and they fry,  
And they chatter and stare;  
They chaffer and haggle,  
And each one is keen  
On making a bargain,  
And profit, and profit—  
For me there's no profit!  
I beg, I implore:  
The money I ventured  
Restore me, restore!

For oh, in the business  
I ventured my best:

My youth and my childhood,  
And all I possessed  
Most precious, invested and sold.  
For riches and honour  
I hunted untiring,  
For joy and contentment to be.  
Oh, let me relinquish—  
Too narrow, dear brothers,  
Too hard is the bargain for me!

Too great is the venture,  
Too small is the profit.  
Take, take altogether,  
And yours shall remain,  
The honour, the riches,  
The power and learning,  
And give me my youth  
And my childhood again!  
Give back, oh, give back  
The lovely, the vanished,  
The years that so quickly  
Have slipt from my hold!  
The gateway of faith,  
Once more fling it open—  
Of hope and of gladness  
The portals of gold!

You look on me, brothers,  
You sigh, and you pity  
My life, my misfortune,  
My lack of good sense.  
Oh, short-sighted creatures,  
Oh, poor, foolish creatures,  
You feel not,  
You know not,  
How happy am I!  
How happy am I,

When, free as an eagle,  
 My spirit her pinions  
 Hath spread, and is flown  
 To other dominions,  
 The home of the stars,  
 Where youth's fadeless flowers  
 Still perfume the shore,  
 Where this world's false treasures,  
 Her tears and her pleasures,  
 Are heard of no more! . . .

### MY EPITAPH.

YES, many songs of bitterness and tears  
 I've sung for you, my friends, in bygone years,  
 And, with my last remaining tooth outworn,  
 The hapless jargon have I bit and torn,  
 And chewed the dear, old speech that was our mother's  
 Some parts with rhyme I salted, peppered others  
 With verse, and tried to make it soft and nice,  
 Essayed to smother something of the spice  
 That now and then too vividly recalls  
 The Düneburg and Wilna market stalls,  
 The flavour spreading ten miles round a place  
 Where once the jargon left, if but a trace . . .  
 Yes, eight long years, dear brothers, have I sung  
 And much devised in this pleasing tongue.  
 Some praised, and others blamed me (not a few),  
 I heard—and took my fiddle up anew! . . .

But Israel is a very stiff-necked nation,  
 A bitter folk, peculiar, separate.  
 From Egypt's sea to Horeb's desolation,  
 And from Mount Horeb to the present date,  
 God knows, he knows! you tear yourself in pieces,